

(A)

CLEONE.

A

TRAGEDY,

BY MR. R. DODSLEY.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, IN COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

"The lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

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TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
PHILIP DORMER STANHOPE,
EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

MY LORD,

ENCOURAGED by the favourable opinion of many among the most ingenious of my friends, but particularly animated by your Lordship's approbation, I ventured to bring this Play on the Stage, even after it had been refused where I first intended it should appear. As the reception it met with from the Public hath amply justified your Lordship's sentiments concerning it, permit me to take this opportunity of presenting it to You, as an unseigned testimony of the respect I bear for your Lordship's distinguished merit, and as a grateful, though unequal return, for the many favours, which it is my pride to own, I have received from your hands. For I do not mean, my Lord, in this address, to offend your delicacy by a needless panegyric upon Your character, which will be deliver'd down with admiration to latest posterity, but to do

*the highest honour to my own, by thus publishing to
the world, that I have not been thought unworthy the
favour and patronage of the Earl of Chesterfield.*

I am,

my Lord,

with great Respect,

your Lordship's

most obliged and

obedient humble Servant,

R. DODSLEY.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

AN imperfect hint towards the Fable of the following Tragedy, was taken from the Legend of St. Genevieve written originally in French, and translated into English about an hundred years ago by Sir William Lower. The first sketch of it, consisting then of Three Acts only, was shewn to Mr. Pope two or three years before his death, who inform'd me that in his very early youth, he had attempted a Tragedy on the same subject, which he afterwards destroy'd; and he advised me to extend my plan to Five Acts.

It lay by me, however, for some years, before I pursu'd it; discourag'd by the apprehension of failing in the attempt; but happening at last to discover a method of altering and extending it, I resum'd my design; and as leisure from my other avocations permitted, have brought it to its present state.

I cannot omit this opportunity of repeating my acknowledgments to the Public for the continuance of their candid reception to these imperfect scenes. The Performers also are entitled to my thanks, for their diligent application to their respective parts, and for their just and forcible manner of representing them.

I have endeavoured in this third[†] edition to avail myself of every material objection that hath come to my knowledge, as far

[†] Printed in 1759.

as I could do so without totally altering the fable; not indeed with the vain hope of producing at last a faultless piece, but in order to render it in some degree less unworthy of that indulgence with which it has been honour'd. I have only to add, that if it should be acted another season, I could wish it might be studied from the present copy, as I hope it is not only more correct, but somewhat improved.

CLEONE.

THIS Play, the production of one of the greatest protectors of letters in others, and a man of no mean powers himself, is built in part upon the old French legend of ST. GENEVIEVE.

DODSLEY offered it to GARRICK, but the manager declined it for a cause to him sufficient—it contained no character expressly suited to his own great powers.

To the other house, therefore, it was taken, and in 1758 acted with universal applause. Miss BEL-LAMY sustained the trying character of the principal, and in the conclusive scenes of maternal agony over her murdered child harrowed the hearts of the audience with powers then at their height, and by many conceived of the highest excellence.

The whole of this Drama is chastely written; with no aim after decorative pomp, or figurative anguish. NATURE presides over the whole, and dictates through a tender mind every sentiment of CLEONE.

The distress is perhaps too horrible for female minds to bear;—the maternal feelings are those which vibrate with the greatest keenness of sensation.

PROLOGUE.

By WILLIAM MELMOTH, Esq.

Spoken by Mr. Ross.

*'TWAS once the mode inglorious war to wage
With each bold bard that durst attempt the stage,
And Prologues were but preludes to engage.
Then mourn'd the Muse not story'd woes alone,
Condemn'd to weep, with tears unfeign'd, her own.
Past are those hostile days : and wits no more
One undistinguished fate with fools deplore.
No more the Muse laments her long-felt wrongs,
From the rude licence of tumultuous tongues :
In peace each bard prefers his doubtful claim,
And as he merits, meets, or misses, Fame.*

*'Twas thus in Greece (when Greece fair science blest,
And Heav'n-born arts their chosen land possest.)
Th' assembled people sate with decent pride,
Patient to hear, and skilful to decide ;
Less forward far to censure than to praise,
Unwillingly refus'd the rival Bays.
Yes ; they whom candour and true taste inspire,
Blame not with half the passion they admire ;
Each little blemish with regret descry,
But mark the beauties with a raptur'd eye.
Yet modest fears invade our Author's breast,
With Attic lore, or Latian, all unblest ;*

PROLOGUE.

*Deny'd by Fate through classic fields to stray,
Where bloom those wreaths which never know decay :
Where arts new force from kindred arts acquire,
And poets catch from poets genial fire.*

*Not thus he boasts the breast humane to prove,
And touch those springs which generous passions move,
To melt the soul by scenes of fabled woe,
And bid the tear for fancy'd sorrows flow ;
Far humbler paths he treads in quest of fame,
And trusts to Nature what from Nature came.*

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

SIFROY, a general officer,	-	-	-	Mr. Ros.
BEAUFORT senior, father of Cleone,	-	-	-	Mr. Ridout.
BEAUFORT junior, her brother,	-	-	-	Mr. Dyer.
PAULET, the friend of Sifroy,	-	-	-	Mr. Clarke.
GLANVILLE, a near relation,	-	-	-	Mr. Sparks.
RAGOZIN, a servant corrupted by Glanville,	Mr. Anderson.			

Women.

CLEONE, the wife of Sifroy,	-	-	-	Mrs. Bellamy.
ISABELLA, her companion,	-	-	-	Mrs. Elmy.
A CHILD about five years old.				

Officers of Justice, Servants, &c.

SCENE, Sifroy's House, and an adjoining Wood.

TIME, that of the Action.



CLEONE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Room in SIFROY's House. Enter GLANVILLE and ISABELLA.

Glanville.

WHAT means this diffidence, this idle fear ?
Have I not given thee proof my heart is thine ?
Proof that I mean to sanctify our joys
By sacred wedlock ? Why then doubt my truth ?
Why hesitate, why tremble thus to join
In deeds, which justice and my love to thee
Alone inspire ? If we are one, our hopes,
Our views, our interests ought to be the same.
And canst thou tamely see this proud Sifroy
Triumphant lord it o'er my baffled rights ?
Those late acquir'd demesnes, by partial hand
Consign'd to him, in equity are mine.

Isab. The story oft I've heard : yet sure Sifroy
Hath every legal title to that wealth

By will bequeath'd ; and childless should he die,
The whole were thine. Wait then till time—

Glan. Art thou,
My Isabella, thou an advocate
For him whose hand, with felon-arts, with-holds
Those treasures which I covet but for thee ?
Where is thy plighted faith ?—thy vows ?—thy truth ?

Isab. Forbear reproach !—O Glanville, love to thee
Hath robb'd me of my truth—seduc'd me on
From step to step, till virtue quite forsook me.
False if I am, 'tis to myself, not thee ;
Thou hast my heart, and thou shalt guide my will,
Obedient to thy wishes.

Glan. Hear me then—
This curst Sifroy stands in my fortune's way ;
I must remove him.—Well I know his weakness—
His fiery temper favours my design,
And aids the plot that works his own undoing.
Yet whilst far off remov'd, he leads our troops,
The nation's doughty chief, he stands secure,
Beyond the reach of my avenging hand.
But this will force him home—I have convey'd,
By Ragozin his servant, whom I sent
On other business, letters which disclose
His wife's amour with Paulet.

Isab. Ah ! tho' me
Thou hast convinc'd, and I believe her false,
Think'st thou Sifroy will credit the report ?
Will not remembrance of her seeming truth,

Her artful modesty, and acted fondness,
Secure the easy confidence of love ?

Glan. I know it ought not. Weak must be the man
Who builds his hopes on such deceitful ground.

Paulet is young, not destitute of passion ;
Her husband absent, they are oft together :
Then she hath charms to warm the coldest breast,
Melt the most rigid virtue into love,
And tempt the firmest friendship to be frail.
All this I've urg'd, join'd with such circumstance,
Such strong presumptive proof, as cannot fail
To shake the firm foundations of his trust.
This once accomplish'd, his own violence
And heated rage, will urge him to commit
Some desperate act, and plunge him into ruin.

Isab. But grant thou should'st succeed, what will
ensue ?

Suppose him dead, doth he not leave an heir,
An infant son, that will prevent thy claim ?

Glan. That bar were easily remov'd.—But soft,
Who's here ? 'Tis Ragozin return'd.

Enter RAGOZIN.

Glan. What news,
Dear Ragozin ? How did Sifroy receive
My letters ? Speak—My vast impatience would
Know all at once.—What does his rage intend ?

Rag. All you could wish. A whirlwind is but weak
To the wild storm that agitates his breast.
At first indeed he doubted—swo're 'twas false—

Impossible—But as he read, his looks
 Grew fierce; pale horror trembled on his cheek;
 O she is vile!—It must, it must be so—
 Glanville is just, is good, and scorns to wrong her—
 I know his friendship, know his honest heart—
 Then falling, sobb'd in speechless agony.

Glan. Good, very good!—I knew 'twould gall—
 Proceed.

Rag. His smother'd grief at length burst forth in
 rage.

He started from the floor—he drew his sword—
 And fixing it with violence in my grasp—
 Plunge this, he cry'd, O plunge it in the heart
 Of that vile traitor, Paulet!—Yet forbear—
 That exquisite revenge my own right hand
 Demands, nor will I give it to another!
 This said—push'd on by rage, he to her sire
 Dispatch'd a letter, opening to him all
 Her crime, and his dishonour. This to you.

[*Gives a letter.*

Glan. How eagerly he runs into the toils,
 Which I have planted for his own destruction!—
 Dear Ragozin, success shall double all
 My promises; and now we are embark'd,
 We must proceed, whatever storms arise.

Isab. But read the letter.

[*Glanville opens the letter and reads.*

“ Tho' thou hast stabb'd me to the heart, I cannot
 “ but thank thy goodness for the tender regard thou
 “ hast shewn to my honour. The traitor Paulet shall

“ die by my own hand : that righteous vengeance must
 “ be mine. Mean time, forbid the villain’s entrance
 “ to my house. As to her who was once my wife, let
 “ her go to her father’s, to whom I have written ;
 “ leaving it to him to vindicate her virtue, or conceal
 “ her shame. I am in too much confusion to add more.

“ SIFROY.”

This is enough—by Heaven ! I sought no more.

It is the point at which my wishes aim’d.

The death of Paulet must include his own ;

Justice will take that life my injuries seek,

Nor shall suspicion cast one glance on me.

But does he purpose soon to leave the army,

Or let his vengeance sleep ?

Rag. All wild he raves,

That honour should forbid to quit his charge.

Yet what resolves the tumult in his breast

May urge, is hard to say.

Glan. We must prepare

For his arrival ; well I know his rage

Will burst all bounds of prudence. Thou, my friend,

(For from the hour which shall complete our business,

Thy servitude shall cease) be diligent

To watch all accidents, and well improve

Whatever chance may rise.

Rag. Trust to my care.

[Exit.

Glan. Now, Isabella ! now th’ important hour

To prove my truth, arises to my wish.

No longer shalt thou live the humble friend

Of this Cleone, but, her equal born,
Shalt rise by me to grace an equal sphere.

Isab. Her equal born I am—nor can my heart
A keener pang than base dependence feel.
Yet weak by nature, and in fear for thee,
I tremble for th' event.—O should'st thou fail—

Glan. To me, my Isabella, trust the proof
Of her conceal'd amour. I know full well
Her modesty is mere disguise, assum'd
To cheat the world; but it deceives not me.
I shall unveil her latent wickedness,
And on her midnight revels pour the day.

Isab. Scarce can my heart give credit—

Glan. Thou, alas,
Art blinded by the semblance she displays
Of truth and innocence; but I explore
Her inmost soul, and in her secret thoughts
Read wantonness. Believe me, this gay youth,
Mask'd in the guise of friendship to Sifroy,
Is her vile paramour. But I forget;
Tell Ragozin, my love, to wait without;
This business asks dispatch, and I may want
His useful aid.

Isab. I go; but still my heart
Beats anxious, lest the truth of thy suspicions
Should fail of proof. [Exit Isabella.

Glan. Fear nothing, I'm secure.—
Fond, easy fool! whom for my use alone,
Not pleasure, I've ensnar'd; thou little dream'st,
That fir'd with fair Cleone's heaven of charms,

I burn for their enjoyment. There, there too,
Did this Sifroy, this happy hated rival,
Defeat the first warm hopes that fir'd my bosom.
I mark'd her beauties rising in their bloom,
And purpos'd for myself the rip'ning sweetness ;
But ere my hand could reach the tempting fruit,
'Twas ravish'd from its eager grasp. And, oh !
Would fate at last permit me to prevail,
Vengeance were satisfy'd. I will attend her ;
And urge my suit, tho' oft repuls'd, once more.
If she's obdurate still, my slighted love
Converts to hatred : I will then exert
The power which her deluded lord hath given,
Drive her this instant hence, and in her flight,
To glut my great revenge, she too shall fall. [Exit.

SCENE III.

Changes to another Room. Enter CLEONE, and a Servant.

Cle. Paulet ! my husband's friend ! give him admittance ;

His friendship sympathizes with my love,
Cheers me by talking of my absent lord,
And sooths my heart with hopes of his return.

Enter PAULET.

Pau. Still do these low'ring clouds of sorrow shade Cleone's brow, and sadden all her hours ?

Cle. Ah Paulet ! have I not just cause to mourn ?

Three tedious years have past since these sad eyes
Beheld my dear Sifroy : and the stern brow
Of horrid war still frowns upon my hopes.

Pau. The fate of war, 'tis true, hath long detain'd
My noble friend from your fond arms and mine :
But his redoubted sword by this last stroke
Must soon reduce the foe to sue for peace.
The gallant chief who led the barbarous host,
And was hiñself their soul, is fallen in battle,
Slain by the valiant hand of your Sifroy.

Cle. To me, alas, his courage seems no virtue :
Dead to all joy, but what his safety gives,
To every hope, but that of his return,
I dread the danger which his valour seeks,
And tremble at his glory. O good Heaven !
Restore him soon to these unhappy arms,
Or much I fear, they'll never more enfold him.

Pau. What means Cleone ? No new danger can
Affright you for my friend. I fear your breast
Beats with the dread of some impending ill,
Threatening yourself. Now, by the love that binds
My heart to your Sifroy, let me entreat,
If my assistance can avail you aught,
That, to the utmost hazard of my life,
You will command my service.

Cle. Kind Heaven, I thank thee ! My Sifroy hath yet
One faithful friend. O Paulet—but to thee,
The many virtues that adorn the mind
Of my lov'd lord, and made me once so blest,
'Twere needless to display. In mine alone

His happiness was plac'd ; no grief, no care
Came ever near my bosom ; not a pain
But what his tenderness partaking, sooth'd.
All day with fondness would he gaze upon me,
And to my listening heart repeat such things,
As only love like his knew how to feel.
O my Sifroy ! when, when wilt thou return ?
Alas, thou know'st not to what bold attempts
Thy unsuspecting virtue has betray'd me !

Pau. What danger thus alarms Cleone's fear ?

Cle. I am ashamed to think, and blush to say,
That in my husband's absence this poor form,
These eyes, or any feature should retain
The power to please—but Glanville well you know—

Pau. Sure you suspect not him of base designs !
He wears the semblance of much worth and honour.

Cle. So to the eye the speckled serpent wears
A shining beauteous form ; but deep within,
Foul stings and deadly poisons lurk unseen.
O Paulet, this smooth serpent hath so crept
Into the bosom of Sifroy, so wound
Himself about my love's unguarded heart,
That he believes him harmless as a dove.

Pau. Good Heaven, if thou abhor'st deceit, why
suffer
A villain's face to wear the look of virtue ?
Who would have thought his loose desires had flown
So high a pitch ?—Have you imparted aught
Of his attempts to Isabella ?

Cle. No.

Pau. I had suspicion his designs were there.

Cle. I've thought so too : nay have some cause to fear
That she's his wife. This hath restrain'd my tongue.

Pau. 'Tis well if she deserve your tenderness.
But say, Cleone, let me know the means,
Which this most impious man, this trusted friend,
Hath taken to betray—

Cle. I hear his voice ;
And this way he directs his hated steps.
Retire into that room—he seldom fails
To hint his bold desires. Your self perhaps
May thence detect him, and by open shame
Deter him from persisting. [Paulet goes into the room.

Enter GLANVILLE.

Glan. I greet you, lady, with important news ;
The Saracens are beaten—yet Sifroy,
Coldly neglectful of your blooming charms,
Pursues a remnant of the flying foe
To strong Avignon's walls, where shelter'd safe,
The hardy troops may bear a tedious siege.
Why then, Cleone, should you still resist
The soft entreaties of my warm desire ?
Methinks the man but ill deserves your truth,
Who leaves the sweet Elysium of your arms
To tread the dangerous fields of horrid war.

Cle. And what, O Glanville, what dost thou deserve ?
Thou, who with treachery repay'st the trust
Of sacred friendship ? Thou, who but to quench

A loose desire, a lawless passion's rage,
Would'st banish truth and honour from thy breast?

Glan. Honour!—What's honour? A vain phantom
rais'd

To fright the weak from tasting those delights,
Which Nature's voice, that law supreme, allows.
Be wise, and laugh at all its idle threats.
Besides, with me your fame would be secure,
Discretion guards my name from censure's tongue.

Cle. And dost thou call hypocrisy, discretion?
Say'st thou that vice is wisdom? Glanville, hear me.
With thee, thou say'st, my fame would be secure;
Unsully'd by the world. It might. Yet know,
Tho' hid beneath the center of the earth,
Remov'd from envy's eye, and slander's tongue,
Nay from the view of Heaven itself conceal'd,
Still would I shun the very thought of guilt,
Nor wound my secret conscience with reproach.

Glan. Romantic all! Come, come, why were you
form'd
So tempting fair; why grac'd with ev'ry charm,
With eyes that languish, limbs that move with grace—
Why were these beauties given you, but to soothe
The sweet, the strong sensations they excite?
Why were you made so beauteous, yet so coy?

[Offers to embrace her, she puts him by with disdain.]

Cle. Base hypocrite! why rather wert thou suffer'd
Beneath fair virtue's mien to hide a heart
So vile? Why this, good Heaven! But dost thou think
Thy foul devices shall be still conceal'd?

Sifroy shall know thee ; thy detested crime
Shall stand reveal'd in all its horrid form.

Glan. Is love a crime ? O ask your feeling heart—
[Paulet bursts from the room.

Pau. Villain, desist !

Glan. Ha ! Paulet here !—'Tis well :
He is her minion then ! 'Tis as I guess'd ;
My letters to Sifroy traduc'd them not. [Aside.

Pau. Vile hypocrite !—what ! lurk such warm desires
Beneath that sober mask of sanctity ?
Is this the firm undoubted honesty,
In which Sifroy confiding, sleeps secure ?

Glan. And is it fit that thou should'st lecture vice ?
Thou who, even here, this moment wert conceal'd,
The favorite object of lewd privacy ?
Should'st thou declaim against the rich repast,
Thy gluttonous appetite alone enjoys
To all the heights of luxury ?—Sweet lady !
Who now shall stand reveal'd before Sifroy ?
But I have long, long known your intercourse,
Nor wanted clearer proof to speak your crimes.

[Going.

Cle. O heaven and earth !

Pau. Stay, monster ! by high Heaven,
Thy life shall answer this vile calumny.

Glan. Dream not I fear !—thy threatenings I despise.
Soon I'll return, to thine and her confusion.

[Exit Glanville.

Cle. What have I done ? unhappy rash concealment !
This may, alas ! give colour to his charge.

Pau. He dares not wrong you with the least surmise,
 The slightest imputation on your fame !
 Nor would the world believe him. Your fair deeds,
 The constant tenor of your virtuous life,
 Would triumph o'er th' audacious tale.

Cle. Ah, Paulet !
 The sting of slander strikes her venom deep.
 An envious world with joy devours the tale,
 That stains with infamy a spotless name.
 Yet what's the vain opinion of the world !
 To keep one voice, one single heart's esteem,
 Is all my wish. If my Sifroy but think—

Pau. Wound not your peace with vain ungrounded fears.

My friend is noble, knows your virtues well ;
 Nor will he suffer jealousy to shake
 His generous mind with doubt. And for that wretch,
 This arm shall give him chastisement.

Cle. Ah ! no ;
 I fear the chastisement of Glanville's guilt
 May loose the tongue of censure on my innocence.
 And can I bear, now, in my husband's absence,
 The whisper'd falsehood of malicious tales,
 That cast a doubt on his Cleone's truth ?
 O rather leave his punishment to Heaven !
 At least defer it till my lord's return.

Pau. And shall the man I love return, and find
 A villain unchastis'd, who in my sight

Presumptuous dar'd to wound his honour !
It must not, shall not be.

Re-enter GLANVILLE with RAGOZIN.

Glan. Mark me, young Sir,
'Tis with authority that I forbid
Your entrance in this house. Sifroy, convinc'd
Of all your secret crimes with that vile wanton,
Spurns from his door the falsehood he disdains.

Cle. Let me not hear it ! I ! am I a wanton ?
Does my dear lord think his Cleone vile ?

Glan. He knows it well.

Pau. Villain, 'tis false ! He scorns
So mean a thought.

Glan. To silence every doubt,
See his own hand.

Pau. [Shewing the letter to Ragozin.] Say, whence is
this ? who brought it ?

Rag. I brought it from my master.

Glan. Look upon it.

[Cleone and Paulet look over it.]

Cle. Am I then banish'd from my husband's house ?
Branded with infamy !—was once his wife !
Unkind Sifroy ! am I not still thy wife ?
Indeed thy faithful wife ! and when thou know'st,
As know thou wilt, how falsely I'm accus'd,
This cruel sentence sure will pierce thy heart.

Pau. Amazement strikes me dumb !—This impious
scroll

Is forg'd. Sifroy, tho' rash, is noble, just,

And good. Too good, too noble to permit
So mean a thought to harbour in his breast.

Cle. No : 'tis his hand—his seal. And can I bear
Suspicion ! Ah ! Sifroy, didst thou not know
My heart incapable—

Pau. Licentious wretch !

At what fell mischief has thy malice aim'd ?

Glan. At thine and her detection, which at length
I have accomplish'd.

Pau. Impudent and vain !

Think'st thou Cleone's virtue, her fair truth,
Can suffer taint from thy unhallow'd breath ?

Were they not proof but now against thy arts ?

Glan. Mistaken man ! To gain one personal proof
Of her incontinence, that feign'd attempt
Was made ; all other proof I had before.

And why I fail'd thou know'st ;
Who in her private chamber close conceal'd,
Mad'st it imprudent she should then comply.

Cle. Detested slanderer ! I despise thy baseness ;
Disdain reply ; and trust in Heaven's high hand
To dash thy bold designs. [Exit Cleone.

Pau. [Whispering.] Observe me, Sir—

This insult on the honour of my friend
Must be chastis'd. At morning's earliest dawn,
In the close vale, behind the castle's wall,
Prepare to meet me arm'd.

Glan. Be well assur'd

I will not fail.

Yet stay—let Prudence guide me—

[Exit Paulet.

Courage, what is't?—'tis folly's boisterous rashness,
And draws its owner into hourly dangers.

I hold it safer he were met to-night. [Aside.]
Thou see'st, my Ragozin, we are embark'd
Upon a troubled sea: our safeties now
Depend on boldly stemming every wave,
That might o'erwhelm our hopes. Paulet must die—
He's dangerous, and not only may defeat
Our enterprise, but bring our lives in hazard.

Rag. Shall we not frustrate thus your first design,
To make the law subservient to your aims
Against the life and fortunes of Sifroy?

Glan. Leave that to me. Sifroy, full well I know
Will soon arrive. Thou, when the gloom of night
Shall cast a veil upon the deeds of men,
Trace Paulet's steps, and in his bosom plunge
Thy dagger's point: thus shall thy care prevent
His future babbling; and to prove the deed
Upon Sifroy, be mine.

Rag. He dies this night.

Glan. Let thy first blow make sure his death,
So shall no noise detect thee. Hither strait
Convey his corpse, which secretly interr'd
Within the garden's bound, prevents discovery,
Till I shall spring the mine of their destruction.

Rag. He shall not live an hour. [Exit Ragozin.]

Glan. Hence, hence remorse!
I must not, will not feel thy scorpion sting.
Yet hell is in my breast, and all its fiends
Distract my resolutions.—I am plung'd

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ACT II.

CLEONE.

27

In blood, and must wade thro': no safety now
But on the farther shore. Come then, revenge,
Ambition come, and disappointed love;
Be you my dread companions: steel, O steel
My heart with triple firmness, nerve my arm
With tenfold strength, and guide it to achieve
The deeds of terror which yourselves inspir'd.

ACT II. SCENE I.

*A Room in SIFROY's House. GLANVILLE and
ISABELLA.*

Glanville.

SURE the dark hand of death ere this hath clos'd
The prying eyes of Paulet, and secur'd
Our bold attempt from danger. But hast thou,
Free from suspicion, to Cleone's hand
Convey'd the letter, forg'd against myself,
Pressing her instant flight, and branding me
With black designs against her life?

Isab. I have;

Pretending 'twas receiv'd from hands unknown.
But lurks no danger here! Will not this letter,
Discover'd after death, thy guilt betray?

Glan. There am I guarded too. The deed once done,
A deep enormous cavern in the wood
Receives her body, and for ever hides.
But she perus'd, thou say'st, the letter—Well—

How wrought it?—Say—this moment will she fly?
Success in this, and all shall be our own.

Isab. Silent she paus'd—and read it o'er and o'er.
Then lifting up her eyes—Forgive him, Heaven!
Was all she said. But soon her rising fear
Resolv'd on quick escape. Suspicion too,
That all her servants are by thee corrupted,
Prompts her to fly alone, save with her child,
The young Sifroy, whom clasping to her breast,
And bathing with a flood of tears, she means,
Safe from thy snares, to shelter with her father.

Glan. Just as I hop'd—Beneath the friendly gloom
Of Baden wood, whose unfrequented shades
They ~~leads~~ must pass to reach her father's house,
I have contriv'd, and now ordain their fall.
Kindly she plans her scheme, as tho' herself
Were my accomplice.

Isab. As we parted, tears
Gush'd from her eyes—she closely press'd my hand,
And hesitating cry'd—O Isabella!
If 'tis not now too late, beware of Glanville.
I scarce could hold from weeping.

Glan. Fool! root out
That weakness, which unfits th' aspiring soul
For great designs. But hush! who's here?

Enter RAGOZIN.

Glan. Say, quickly—
Is our first work achiev'd?
Rag. Successfully.

With two bold ruffians, whose assisting hands
Were hir'd to make the business sure, I trac'd
His steps with care; and in the darksome path
Which leads beside the ruin'd abby's wall,
With furious onset suddenly attack'd him.

Instant he drew, and in my arm oblique
Fix'd a slight wound; but my associates soon
Perform'd their office; and betwixt them borne,
I left him to an hasty burial, where
You first directed.

Glan. We are then secure
From his detection; and may now advance
With greater safety. O my Ragozin,
But one step more remains, to plant our feet
On this Sifroy's possessions; and methinks
Kind opportunity now points the path
Which leads us to our wish.

Rag. Propose the means.

Glan. This hour Cleone with her infant boy,
Borrowing faint courage from the moon's pale beam,
Prepares to seek the mansion of her father.
Thou know'st the neighbouring wood through which
they pass.

Rag. I know each path and every brake.

Glan. There hid
In secret ambush, thou must intercept
Her journey.

Rag. And direct her to the world
Unknown.

Glan. Thou read'st my meaning right. Go thou

To hasten her departure, and to keep [To Isabella.
Her fears awake.

Isab. Already she believes
Her life depends upon her instant flight.

[Exit Isabella.

Glan. And haply ours. Each moment that she lives
Grows dangerous now; and should she reach her
father,

All may be lost. Let therefore no delay
Hang on thy foot-steps: terror wings her flight:
Our danger calls at least for equal speed.

Rag. They 'scape me not. I know the private path
They needs must tread thro' Baden's lonesome wood,
And death shall meet them in the dreary gloom.

Glan. Meantime, soon as she leaves her house, I raise,
From whispering tongues, a probable report,
That she with Paulet seeks some foreign shore.
This will confirm her guilt, and shelter us
From all suspicion.

Rag. True; both gone at once
Will give an air of truth so plausible—

Glan. Hark! hush!

Rag. Who is it?

Glan. 'Tis Cleone's voice!

This way she comes—we must not now be seen.
Fly to thy post, and think on thy reward. [Exeunt.

Enter CLEONE with her Child.

Cle. No Paulet to be found! Misfortune sure
Prevents his friendship; and I dare not wait

For his assistance. Friendless and alone
I wander forth, Heaven my sole guide, and truth
My sole support. But come, my little love,
Thou wilt not leave me.

Child. No, indeed I won't!
I'll love you, and go with you every where,
If you will let me.

Cle. My sweet innocent!
Thou shalt go with me. I've no comfort left
But thee. I had—I had a husband once,
And thou a father.—But we're now cast out
From his protection, banish'd from his love.

Child. Why won't he love us? Sure I've heard you
say,
You lov'd him dearly.

Cle. O my bursting heart!
His innocence will kill me. So I do,
My angel, and I hope you'll love him too.

Child. Yes, so I will, if he'll love you: and can't
I make him love you?

Cle. Yes, my dear; for how
Could he withstand that sweet persuasive look
Of infant innocence?

Child. O then he shall,
If ever I do see him, he shall love you.

Cle. My best, my only friend! and wilt thou plead
Thy poor wrong'd mother's cause?

Enter ISABELLA.

Isab. Dear Madam, haste! why thus delay your flight,

When dangers rise around?

Cle. Indeed, my steps
Will linger, Isabella.—O 'tis hard—
Alas, thou canst not tell how hard it is—
To leave a husband's house so dearly lov'd!
Yet go I must—my life is here unsafe.
Pardon, good Heaven, the guilt of those who seek it!
I fear not death: yet fain methinks would live
To clear my truth to my unkind Sifroy.

Isab. O doubt not, Madam, he will find the truth,
And banish from his breast this strange suspicion.
But haste, dear lady, wing your steps with haste,
Lest death should intercept—

Cle. And must I go?
Adieu, dear mansion of my happiest years!
Adieu, sweet shades! each well-known bower, adieu!
Where I have hung whole days upon his words,
And never thought the tender moments long—
All, all my hopes of future peace, farewell!

[*Throws herself on her knees.*
But, O great Power! who bending from thy throne
Look'st down with pitying eyes on erring man,
Whom weakness blinds, and passions lead astray,
Impute not to Sifroy this cruel wrong!
O heal his bosom, wounded by the darts
Of lying slander, and restore to him

That peace, which I must never more regain. [Rises.
 Come, my dear love, Heaven will, I trust, protect
 And guide our wandering steps! Yet stay—who knows,
 Perhaps my father too, if slander's voice
 Hath reach'd his ear, may chide me from his door,
 Or spurn me from his feet!—My sickening heart
 Dies in me at that thought! Yet surely he
 Will hear me speak! A parent sure, will not
 Reject his child unheard!

Isab. He surely will not. Whence these groundless
 fears?

Cle. Indeed I am to blame, to doubt his goodness.
 Farewell, my friend!—And oh, when thou shalt see
 My still belov'd Sifroy; say, I forgive him—
 Say I but live to clear my truth to him;
 Then hope to lay my sorrows in the grave,
 And that my wrongs, lest they should wound his peace,
 May be forgotten. [Exit Cleone, with her Child.

Isab. Gracious Heaven! her grief
 Strikes thro' my heart! Her truth, her innocence
 Are surely wrong'd.—O wherefore did I yield
 My virtue to this man? Unhappy hour!
 But 'tis too late!—Nor dare I now relent.

Enter GLANVILLE.

Glan. The gate is clos'd against her, never more
 (If right I read her doom) to give her entrance.
 Thus far, my Isabella, our designs
 Glide smoothly on. The hand of prudence is
 To me the hand of Providence.

Isab. Alas !

How blind, how impotent is human prudence !
I wish, and hope indeed, that screen'd beneath
The shades of night, which hide these darker deeds,
We too may lie conceal'd : but ah, my hopes
Are dash'd with fear, lest Heaven's all-piercing eye,
That marks our covert guilt, should flash detection.

Glan. [Sternly.] If thy vain fears betray us not,
we're safe.

Observe me well.—Had I the least surmise,
That struck by conscience, or by phantoms awed,
Thou now would'st shrink--and leave me, or betray . . .
By all the terrors that would shake my soul
To perpetrate the deed, thou too should'st fall !

Isab. And canst thou then suspect, that after all
I've done to prove my love, I should betray thee ?
O Glanville ! thou art yet, it seems, to learn,
That in her fears tho' weak, a woman's love
Inspires her soul to dare beyond her sex.

Glan. Forgive me, Isabella, I suspect
Thee not ; this raging fever in my brain
Distracts my reason. But no more—I know
Thee faithful, and will hence be calm.

Isab. Indeed my heart has been so wholly thine,
That ev'n its springs are temper'd to thy wish.

Glan. Think on my warmth no more. I was to
blame.

But come, my love, our chief, our earliest care
Must be to give loud rumour instant voice,
That both detected in their loose amour

Are fled together. Whisper thou the tale
First to the servants, in whose listening ears
Suspicions are already sown ; while I
Th' unwelcome tidings to her sire convey.

*[Exit Isabella one way, and as Glanville is
going out the other, he meets a Servant.]*

Serv. My lady's brother, Sir, young Beaufort, just
Arriv'd, enquires for you, or for his sister.

Glan. Attend him in.—The letters of Sifroy
Have reach'd their hands. My story of her flight
Will, like a closing witness well prepar'd,
Confirm her guilt.

Enter BEAUFORT junior.

Beauf. jun. What strange suspicion, Glanville, has
possess'd

The bosom of Sifroy ? Whence had it birth ?
Or on what ground could malice fix her stand,
To throw the darts of slander on a name
So guarded as Cleone's ?

Glan. I could wish——
It gives me pain to speak—but I could wish
The conduct of Cleone had not given
So fair a mark.

Beauf. jun. So fair a mark !—What ! who ?
Cleone, say'st thou !—Hath my sister given
So fair a mark to slander ?—Have a care !
The breath that blasts her fame may raise a storm
Not easily appeas'd.

Glan. It grieves me, Sir,
That you compel me to disclose, what you

In bitterness of soul must hear. But she
And prudence have of late been much estrang'd.

Beauf. jun. Defame her not—Discretion crowns
her brow,

And in her modest eye sweet innocence
Smiles on detraction. Where, where is my sister ?
She shall confront thy words—her look alone
Shall prove her truth, and calumny confound.

Glan. You surely know not, Sir, that she is fled—

Beauf. jun. What say'st thou ? Fled !—Surprise
choaks up my words !

It cannot be ! Fled ! whither ?—**G**one ! with whom ?

Glan. With Paulet, Sir, Sifroy's young friend.

Beauf. jun. Impossible !

I'm on the rack ! Tell, I conjure thee, tell
The whole mysterious tale. Where are they gone ?

Glan. That they conceal. I only know, that both,
Soon as they found their impious love disclos'd,
With instant speed withdrew : and 'tis suppos'd
Will seek for shelter on some foreign shore.

Beauf. jun. Where then is truth, and where is
virtue fled,

Ere while her dear companions ?—How, my sister,
How art thou fallen !—Thy father too—O parricide !
Had'st thou no pity on his bending age ?
On his fond heart ?—too feeble now to bear
So rude a shock.

Glan. Can it not be conceal'd ?

Beauf. jun. That hope were vain. Himself impa-
tient comes,

From his lov'd daughter to enquire the cause
Of this opprobrious charge. And see, he's here.

Enter BEAUFORT senior.

Beauf. sen. Where is my daughter? where my in-
jur'd child?

O bring me to her! she hath yet a father,
(Thanks to the gracious powers who spar'd my life
For her protection) ready to receive
With tender arms his child, tho' rudely cast
From her rash husband's door. What mean these
tears

That trickle down thy cheek? she is not dead!

Beauf. jun. Good Heaven! what shall I say?—No,
sir—not dead—

She is not dead—but oh!—

Beauf. sen. But what? Wound not
My heart! where is she? lead me to my child—
'Tis from herself alone that I will hear
The story of her wrongs.

Beauf. jun. Alas! dear Sir,
She is not here.

Beauf. sen. Not here!

Beauf. jun. O fortify
Your heart, my dearest father, to support,
If possible, this unexpected stroke!
My sister, Sir—why must I speak her shame?
My wretched sister, yielding to the lure
Of Paulet's arts, hath left her husband's house.

Beauf. sen. Great Pow'r! then have I liv'd, alas!
too long.

This is indeed too much. I cannot bear—
But 'tis impossible!—does not thy heart,
My son, bear testimony for thy sister
Against this calumny?—What circumstance,

[To Glanville.]

What proof have we of my Cleone's guilt?

Glan. Is not their disappearing both at once,
A strong presumption of their mutual guilt?

Beauf. sen. Presumption, say'st thou! Shall one
doubtful fact

Arraign a life of innocence unblam'd?
Shall I give up the virtue of my child,
My heart's sweet peace, the comfort of my age,
On weak surmises?—Sir, I must have proof,
Clear, unambiguous proof, not dark presumption.

Glan. Thus rudely urg'd, my honour bids me speak
What else I meant in tenderness to spare.

Know then, I found the wanton youth conceal'd
In her apartments.

Beauf. sen. Thou dost then confess
Thyself my child's accuser?—but thy word
Will not suffice. Far other evidence
Must force me to believe, that trutin long known,
And native modesty, could thus at once
Desert their station in Cleone's breast.

Glan. Wait then for other evidence—
With such as doubt my honour, I disdain
All further conference. [Exit Glanville.]

Beaf. jun. What can we think ?

His firm undaunted boldness fills my breast
With racking doubts, that dread to be resolv'd,
Yet this suspense is torture's keenest pang.

Beauf. sen. We must not bear it. No, my son, lead
on ;

We must be satisfy'd. Let us direct
Our steps to Paulet's habitation. There,
It seems, we must enquire. And yet my soul
Strongly impels me to suspect this Glanville ;
For can Cleone, virtue's fav'rite ward,
Thus totally be chang'd ?—If thou art fall'n—
If thy weak steps, by this bad world seduc'd,
Have devious turn'd into the paths of shame,
Never, ah ! never let me live to hear
Thy foul dishonour mention'd. If thou art
Traduc'd—and my fond heart still flatters me
With hope—then gracious Heaven ! spare yet my life,
O spare a father to redress his child !

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Area before SIFROY's House. SIFROY alone.

Sifroy.

O DREADFUL change ! my house, my sacred home,
At sight of which my heart was wont to bound
With rapture, I now tremble to approach.

Fair mansion, where bright honour long hath dwelt
With my renown'd progenitors, how, how
At last hath vile pollution stain'd thy walls!
Yet look not down with scorn, ye shades rever'd,
On your dishonour'd son—He will not die
Till just revenge hath by the wanton's blood
Aton'd for this disgrace. Yet can it be?
Can my Cleone, she whose tender smile
Fed my fond heart with hourly rapture, she
On whose fair faith alone I built all hope.
Of happiness—can she have kill'd my peace,
My honour? Could that angel form, which seem'd
The shrine of purity and truth, become
The seat of wantonness and perfidy?
Ye powers!—should she be wrong'd—in my own heart
How sharp a dagger hath my frenzy plung'd!
O passion-govern'd slave! what hast thou done?
Hath not thy madness from her house, unheard,
Driven out thy bosom friend?—Guiltless, perhaps—
Hell, hell is in that thought!—Thou wretch accurst,
Such thy rash fury, thy unbridled rage,
Her guilt or innocence alike to thee
Must bring distraction. But I'll know the worst.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.

Changes to a Room in the House. GLANVILLE and ISABELLA.

Glan. What dost thou say? Already is Sifroy Arriv'd? Who saw him? when?

Isab. This moment, from My window, by the glimmering of the moon, I saw him pass.

Glan. He comes as I could wish. His hot-brain'd fury well did I foresee Would, on the wings of vengeance, swiftly urge His homeward flight. But I am ready arm'd, Rash fool! for thy destruction. And tho' long Thou hast usurp'd my rights, thy death at last Shall give me ample justice.

Isab. Ah, beware; Nor seek his life at peril of thine own.

Glan. Trust me, my love, (tho' time too precious now Permits not to unfold to thee my scheme) I walk in safety, yet have in my grasp, Secure, his hated life.—But see, he comes— Retire.

[*Exit Isabella.*]

Enter SIFROY.

Glan. [Advancing to embrace him.] My honoured friend!—

Sif. Glanville, forbear— And ere I join my arms with thee in friendship,

Say, I conjure thee, by that sacred tie,
By all thou hold'st most dear on earth, by all
Thy hopes of heaven, and dread of deepest hell—
Hast thou not wrong'd my wife ?

Glan. Unjust Sifroy !

Hath my warm friendship thus regardful been,
Thus jealous of thy honour, and dost thou
Yet question mine ? Sure the united bonds
Of friendship and of blood, are ties too strong
To leave a doubt of my sincerity.

And soon too clearly, Sir, you will discern
Who has been false, and who your faithful friend.

Sif. O rack me not ! let dread conviction come—
Her strongest horrors cannot rend my heart
With half the anguish of this torturing doubt.
Speak then—for tho' the tale should fire my brain
To madness, I must hear. Yet, Glanville, stay—
Let me proceed with caution—my soul's peace
Depends on this event. 'Tis said I am rash—
Bear witness ! am I so ?—Where is my wife ?
Severe I may be, but I will be just.
I cannot, will not hear her faith arraign'd,
Before I see her.

Glan. See her, Sir ! alas,
Where will you see her ?

Sif. Where ? thou hast not yet
Convey'd her to her father ?—On the wings
Of speed I flew, still hoping to prevent
The rash decree of unreflecting rage.

Glan. Heaven give thee patience!—O Sifroy! my heart,

Tho' thou hast wrong'd it with unkind suspicion,
Bleeds for thy injuries, for thy distress.

The wife, whom thou so tenderly hast lov'd,
Is fled with Paulet.

Sif. Fled!—How? whither? when?

Glan. This day they disappear'd, and 'tis believ'd
Intend to fly from shame, and leave the land.

Sif. Impossible!—she cannot be so chang'd—
Was she not all my heart could wish?—Take heed—
Once more I charge thee, Glanville, and my soul's
Eternal welfare rests upon thy truth—
Traduce her not! nor drive me to perdition!
For by the flames of vengeance, if I find
Thy accusation true, they shall not 'scape!
Yes, I will trace th' adulterer's private haunts,
Rush like his evil geniis on their shame,
And stab the traitor in her faithless arms—
Almighty Power! whose piercing eye explores
The depths of falsehood! take not from my arm
This due revenge—nor tempt mankind to doubt
The justice of thy ways. Why this intrusion?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lady's father, Sir.

Sif. Her father here!

Glan. Yes, he was here before—thy letters brought
him,

And hence went forth in haste to find out Paulet.

Sif. Conduct him in.

[Exit Servant.

Unhappy man ! his grief,
His venerable tears will wring my heart.
Retire, good Glanville ; interviews like these,
Of deep-felt mutual wo, all witness shun.

[Exit Glanville.

Enter BEAUFORT Senior.

Beauf. sen. Rash man ! what hast thou done ?—on
what surmise

Dost thou impeach the honour of my name,
Sacred thro' many an age from ev'ry stain ?
O ! thou hast from thy bosom cast away
The sweetest flower that ever nature form'd.

Sif. Reproach me not—commiserate a wretch
On whom affliction lays her iron hand !
That flower, which look'd so beauteous to the sense,
Ran wild, grew ranker than a common weed.

Beauf. sen. It is not—cannot be ! Have I not known,
Even from her earliest childhood known her heart ?
Known it the seat of tenderness and truth ?
Her thoughts were ever pure as virgin snows
From heaven descending : and that modest blush,
Display'd on her fair cheek, was virtue's guard.
She could not fall thus low—my child is wrong'd !
Ask thine own heart—recall her blameless life,
Was she not all a parent's fondest wish—

Sif. Call not to my distracted mind how good,
How bright she once appear'd. Time was indeed,
When blest in her chaste love, I fondly thought

My soul possess'd of all that earth held fair
And amiable : but memory of past bliss
Augments the bitter pangs of present wo !
Is she not chang'd—fallen—lost ?

Beauf. sen. Patience, my son,
Compose the tempest of thy grief. Just heaven
Will doubtless soon reveal the hidden deeds
Of guilt and shame. If thy unhappy wife
Thus wanton in the paths of vice hath stray'd—
I would not rashly curse my darling child—
Yet hear me, righteous Heaven ! May infamy,
Disease, and beggary imbitter all
Her wretched life ! But my undoubting heart,
In full conviction of her spotless truth,
Acquits her of all crime.

Sif. Is it no crime,
That listening to a vile seducer's voice,
She leaves her husband's house—her dearest friends ?
Flies with her paramour to foreign climes,
A willing exile ? Damn'd adulteress ! What,
Are these no crimes ?

Beauf. sen. Suppress thy rage. They are :
But is she guilty ? Art thou well inform'd
They went together ? How doth it appear ?
Who saw them ? Where ? Alas ! thy headlong rage
Was too impatient to permit enquiry.

Sif. Were they not missing both ? both at one hour ?
Say, for thou hast enquir'd ; is Paulet found ?

Beauf. sen. He is not : but my son perhaps, whom zeal
To clear a much-lov'd sister's injur'd fame

Eager impels to strictest inquisition,
May bring some tidings.

Sif. May kind Heaven direct
His steps where lurks their covert shame from day,
And from my just revenge.

Beauf. sen. Still, still thy rage
With weak, precarious inference concludes
Their unprov'd guilt. Be calm, and answer me.
Think'st thou thy wife, if bent on loose designs,
Would madly join an infant in her flight,
To impede her steps, and aggravate her shame?

Sif. O my confusion! where, where is my child?
Alas, I had forgot the harmless innocent!
Bring to my arms the poor deserted babe!
He knows no crime, and guiltless of offence
Shall put his little hands into my breast,
And ease a father's bosom of its sorrows.

Beauf. sen. Unhappy man! that comfort is deny'd
thée.

Sif. What means my father? Speak—yet ah, take
heed!

My heart already is too deeply pierc'd,
To bear another wound—What of my child?

Beauf. sen. That he's the partner of his mother's
flight,

Should calm, not raise the tempest of thy grief—
For proves it not by consequence direct,
Some secret injury, not guilt, hath driven
My hapless daughter from her husband's roof?

Sif. What injury, what crime could love like mine

Commit against her? Was she not more dear,
More precious to my heart, than the warm flood
Which feeds its vital motion?

Beauf. sen. Ev'n that love,
If open to the tales of calumny,
Might wound her virtue with unjust suspicion.
Besides, to rashness and credulity
Shadows are daemons, and a weak surmise
Authentic proof. Who's her accuser?

Sif. One
Whose taintless honour, and unshaken truth,
Have oft been try'd, and ever stood approv'd.
He, Sir, whose friendship, with reluctant grief,
At length disclos'd my shame, was honest Glanville:
Report from vulgar breath I had despis'd.

Beauf. sen. So may high Heaven deal mercy to my
child,
As I believe him treacherous and base.

Enter BEAUFORT Junior.

Beauf. sen. Here comes my son—What means this
look of terror?

Beauf. jun. I fear, my father, some dread mischief—
Ha!—

Is he return'd!—Now may the powers avert
This dire suspicion that strikes thro' my heart!
Tell, I conjure thee tell me—where's my sister?
Thou hast not murder'd her!

Sif. Good Heaven! what means
My brother's dreadful words? Murder my wife!

Speak, quickly speak!—My heart shrinks up with horror!

Whence are thy apprehensions?

Beauf. sen. My dear son,
Keep not thy father on the rack of doubt,
But speak thy fears.

Beauf. jun. What fate may have befallen
My injur'd sister, Heaven and thou best know—
But Paulet, whom thy fierce revenge pursu'd,
This night is murder'd.

Sif. Ha! what say'st thou?—Paulet!
Is Paulet dead? How know'st thou he is murder'd?

Beauf. jun. In the dark path which to the cloister
leads,
His sword is found, and bloody marks appear,
That speak the deed too plain.

Sif. But where's my wife?
Was not she with him? Went they not together?

Beauf. jun. Together! no. The villain Glanville's
false!

My sister is traduc'd.

Sif. False! Glanville false!—
What!—Paulet murder'd!—and my wife traduc'd!
Rack me, ye furies! tear me joint from joint!
Your pangs are nothing—I have done a deed,
No tortures can atone! Tremendous Power!
What tempest wrapt in darkness now prepares
To burst on my devoted head? What crime
Unknown, or unrepented, points me out,
The mark distinguish'd of peculiar vengeance?

Why turns the gracious all-benignant eye
Averse from me? O guide my steps to find
Where lurks this hidden mischief—

Beauf. jun. Lurks it not
In thine own breast?

Beauf. sen. My son, forbear.

Sif. Art thou,
My brother, so unkind! Would I have stabb'd
Thy heart, when breaking with convulsive pangs
Of dreadful doubt?—But I deserve unkindness—
I was unkind, was cruel to Cleone—
Yet lead me to her arms—tho' wrong'd, abus'd,
She like offended Heaven, will still forgive.
My friend too, my best friend is murder'd! Oh,
What hand accurst hath wrought this web of woe?
Support me, mercy! 'tis too much, too much!
But let distraction come, and from my brain
Tear out the seat of memory, that I
No more may think, no more may be a wretch!

Beauf. sen. Be calm, my son. When Heaven's high
hand afflicts,
Submission best becomes us—nor let man,
The child of weakness, murmur.

Sif. O my father!
Thee too my rashness hath undone! Thou, thou
Wilt join with Heaven to curse me! but I kiss
The rod of chastisement, and in the dust
Resign'd, a prostrate suppliant, beg for mercy.

Beauf. sen. Moderate the grief
Which thus unmans thee—Rouse thee to the search

Of these dark deeds—and Heaven direct our footsteps.
Hath not suspicion whisper'd to thy heart,
That he, this Glanville, whom thy friendship trusts
With confidence intire, may yet be false?

Sif. Till this dread hour, suspicion of his truth
Ne'er touch'd my breast—Now doubt and horror raise
Distraction in my soul.

Beauf. sen. All-gracious Power!
Look on our sorrows with a pitying eye!
My feeble heart sinks in me—But do thou
Bear up against this tide of wo: I trust,
If goodness dwell in heaven, my child is safe.
Perhaps she seeks the shelter of these arms,
And we have miss'd her in th' entangled wood.
With speed dispatch immediate messengers
Through different paths, with strictest search to trace
Cleone's steps, or find thy murder'd friend.
My son, I charge thee, see this well perform'd.

Beauf. jun. I will not fail. [Exit Beaufort jun.

Beauf. sen. Mean while let us observe
Each motion, word, and look of this fell fiend;
So may we best detect him; and his schemes,
Tho' gloss'd with saint-like show (if much I err not),
Will soon in all their horrors stand reveal'd. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Changes to the Wood. Enter CLEONE and her Child.

Cle. Whence do these terrors seize my sinking heart?

Since guilt I know not, wherefore know I fear?
And yet these silent shadowy scenes awake
Strange apprehensions. Guardian powers! protect
My weakness! Hark! what noise is that?—All still.
It was but fancy.—Yet methought the howl
Of distant wolves broke on the ear of night,
Doubling the desert's horror.

Child. O I'm frightened!

Why do you speak and look so strangely at me?

Cle. I will not fright my love. Come, let's go on—
We've but a little way—Save us, ye Powers!

Enter RAGOZIN with a Dagger and a Mask on.

[Cleone flies with her Child, he follows.

Rag. Stop—for thou fly'st in vain.

Cle. [Within the scenes.] Help! Mercy! Save!
Kill not my infant! Murder! O my child!

[She retreats back to the Scene, and falls in a swoon.

Re-enter RAGOZIN.

Rag. She too is dead!—I fear'd that blow was
short—

But hark! what noise?—I must not be detected—
No time to bury 'em now—be that his care.— [Exit.

Cle. [Waking from her trance.] Where have I been?
What horrid hand hath stamp'd
This dreadful vision on my brain? O Death!
Have I not gain'd thy mansions? Am I still
In this bad world? What ails my heart? my head?
Was not my child here with me? Sure he was—

And some foul da&emon terrifies my soul
 With fears of murder. Gracious Heaven, forbid !
 Conduct my steps, kind Providence, to where
 My little wanderer strays, that I may know
 This horror in my mind is but a dream.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.

*Changes to an adjoining Part of the Wood, and discovers
 the Child murder'd. Enter CLEONE.*

Cle. O fearful silence ! Not a sound returns,
 Save the wild echoes of my own sad cries,
 To my affrighted ear !—My child ! my child !
 Where art thou wander'd—where beyond the reach
 Of thy poor mother's voice !—Yet while above
 The God of justice dwells, I will not deem
 The bloody vision true. Heaven hath not left me—
 There truth is known, well known—and see my love !
 See, where upon the bank its weary'd limbs
 Lie stretch'd in sleep. In sleep ! O agony !
 Blast not my senses with a sight like this !

'Tis blood ! 'tis death ! my child, my child is murder'd !

[Falls down by her child, kissing it and weeping. Then
 raising herself on her arm, after a dead silence,
 and looking by degrees more and more wild, she pro-
 ceeds in a distracted manner.

Hark ! hark ! lie still, my love !—For all the world
 Don't stir !—'Tis Glanville, and he'll murder us !
 Stay, stay—I'll cover thee with boughs—don't fear—

I'll call the little lambs, and they shall bring
Their softest fleece to shelter thee from cold.
There, there—lie close—he shall not see—no, no;
I'll tell him 'tis an angel I have hid. [She rises up.
Where is he? soft!—he's gone, he's gone, my love,
And shall not murder thee.—Poor innocent!
'Tis fast asleep. Well thought! I'll steal away,
Now while he slumbers—pick wild berries for him,
And bring a little water in my hand—
Then, when he wakes, we'll seat us on the bank,
And sing all night.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*A Room in SIFROY's House. GLANVILLE, and
ISABELLA.*

Glanville.

BETRAY'D! by whom betray'd? By thy vain fear.
How curs'd is he who treads on danger's path,
Entangled with a woman! Fool! alone
I had been safe.

Isab. Yet hear me—On my life,
No word from me hath 'scap'd. We may perchance
Be yet secure.

Glan. Perchance! And do our lives
Depend on fickle chance? But speak—proceed—
Whence are thy fears?

Isab. In close concealment hid,
This moment I o'erheard a whisper'd scheme
Of seizing thee.

Glan. Confusion ! Can it be ?
Can Ragozin, the villain, have betray'd me ?

Isab. I fear he hath. Where is he ?

Glan. Not return'd
From Baden wood, to ascertain the deed
That crowns our business. Were but that secure,
My tortur'd soul, torn on the rack of doubt,
Might yet feel peace. How wears the time ?

Isab. Two hours
Are wanting yet to midnight.

Glan. Where's Sifroy ?
Isab. With Beaufort. But perplexing doubts distract
His reason, that all power to act forsakes him.
Still farther to alarm—deep-stain'd with gore,
The sword of Paulet's found, and other marks
That speak him murder'd.

Glan. That's beyond my wish :
And tells but what I wanted to proclaim.

Isab. Proclaim ! What mean'st thou ? Doth it not
conduce
To our detection ? Doth it not confirm
Their dark suspicions ?

Glan. The short line, alas,
Of thy weak thought, in vain would sound the depth
Of my designs. But rest thee well assur'd
I have foreseen, and am prepar'd to meet
All possible events.

Isab. O grant, good Heaven—
Great God ! how dreadful 'tis to be engag'd
In what we dare not pray that Heaven may prosper !

Glan. Curse on thy boding tongue ! Let me not hear
Its superstitious weakness—Hush ! who comes ?
No more—'tis Ragozin—Now sleep distrust.
First let me learn if he hath done the deed,
If not, I am betray'd, and will awake
In vengeance on his falsehood.

Enter RAGOZIN.

Glan. Speak, my friend—
Cleone and her child—say quickly—how disposed ?
Rag. To heav'n remov'd, no longer they obstruct
Our views on earth.

Glan. Speak plainly—are they dead ?
Rag. Both dead.
Glan. Swear, swear to this ! And by all hope
Of that reward which urg'd thee to the deed,
Swear thou hast not betray'd me !

Rag. Whence arise
These base suspicions ? I disdain that crime !
Tho' branded with the name of an assassin,
I am not yet so mean as to betray.

Glan. Distraction !—may I trust thee ?
Rag. As thou wilt.
Glan. [Pausing.] It must be so—we still are safe :
and this

Pretence of strong suspicion is no more
Than subtil artifice, contriv'd to draw
Th'unwary to confession.

Rag. 'Tis no more.
Glan. Nor will I more than with a just contempt

Regard it. All our deeds of blood are done.
What now remains, the law shall execute.

Rag. What's thy intent?

Glan. The thrust thus aim'd at me,
Shall deeply pierce Sifroy's unguarded bosom.
Thy aid once more, as witness to his threats.

Rag. Freely I would, but safety now requires
That I abscond. The stipulated sum,
Forgive me therefore, if I claim this night.

Glan. 'Tis thine. But hark!—retire—I hear his
step—

One moment wait—at his return, 'tis thine.

Rag. [Aside.] Curs'd chance! Were I possess'd of
my reward,
Who would might wait thee now—nor will I more
Than some short moments rest unsatisfied. [Exit.]

Enter SIFROY.

Sif. [Not seeing Glanville.] O happiness! thou frail,
thou fading flower,
Whose culture mocks all human toil, farewell!
But I, blind madman! by the roots have pluck'd
Thy sweetness from my bosom. My dear love!
Where wanders now thy wrong'd, thy helpless virtue?
On what cold stone reclines thy drooping head,
While trickling tears call thy Sifroy inhuman?
Deluded wretch! why did my greedy ear
Catch the rank poison of suspicion's breath,
And to my tortur'd brain convey distraction?

Glan. [Advancing to him.] Are thus my faithful services repaid?

Are the plain truths my undisguising heart
In friendship told, already deem'd no more
Than vile suggestions of designing falsehood?

Sif. Villain, they are!—Thou know'st them false
as hell!

Where is my wife?—O traitor! thou hast plung'd
My soul into perdition!

Glan. Rather say,
That he who led astray the willing wife,
Thy folly doats on—he—

Sif. Blasphemer! stop
Thy impious tongue! The breast of that dear saint
Enshrines a soul as spotless as her form:
Said'st thou not, slanderer! that my love was fled
With Paulet?

Glan. True: I did.

Sif. Art thou not sure
That this is false? Hast thou no dreadful cause
To know it cannot be?

Glan. None. Thou, perhaps,
Whose bloody errand I indeed have heard
Already is accomplish'd—thou, 'tis true,
May'st know that they are parted: 'twas the deed
Thou flew'st thus swiftly to perform. But how
Doth that impeach the truth of her elopement?
That thou hast murder'd him, acquits not her.

Sif. That I have murder'd!—I!—Pernicious wretch!

What dark design, by blackest fiends inspir'd,
Lurks in thy treacherous soul ? Tremendous Power !
Have I then sinn'd beyond all hope of mercy ?
Must the deep phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On my devoted head, be pour'd from him ?
But all thy ways are just ! To him I gave
That credit which I ow'd my injur'd love—
He now, by thy supreme decree, stands forth
The avenger of my crime.

Enter BEAUFORT senior, Officers, &c.

Beauf. sen. Seize there your victim.

Glan. What means this outrage ?—Upon what pre-
tence—

Beauf. sen. The bloody hand of murder points out
thee

To strong suspicion. Turn'st thou pale ?—O wretch !
Thy guilt drinks up thy blood.

Glan. Not guilt, but rage !

Who dares accuse me ?

Beauf. sen. I. Where's Paulet ? where
My daughter ? who thou basely said'st were fled
Together ?

Glan. That his poinard found the way
To part their steps, impeaches not my truth.

Beauf. sen. His poinard !

Glan. His. I should have scorn'd to charge
The man, whose honour I think deeply wrong'd ;
But my own life attempted thus, demands
That truth should rise to light. Cam'st thou not here,

Driven by the fury of a dire revenge?
What other motive urg'd thy desperate haste?

Sif. Insidious slave! hast thou insnar'd my soul
By treacherous arts?—Hast thou with falsehood vile
Inflam'd this hapless breast?—And would'st thou now
Infer my guilt, from my provok'd resentment?

Glan. Lean'd I on feeble inference—I would ask,
What cause have I to seek this Paulet's blood?
'Twas not my wife, my daughter, he seduc'd!
How has he injur'd me? But I reject
These trivial pleas—I build on certain proof.

Beauf. sen. What proof?

Glan. The strongest—his own hand and seal
Fixt to the firm resolve, that he alone

[*Shewing the letter.*]

Would do the righteous deed—for so his rage
Calls Paulet's murder.

Beauf. sen. Ha! What can I think!
Unhappy man! and hast thou to the crime
Of rash suspicion, added that of murder?

Sif. My father, hear thy son; I plead not for
My life, but justice.—That I am a wretch,
Groaning beneath the weight of Heaven's just ire—
That snared and caught in meditated wiles,
I banish'd from my house a guiltless wife—
That burning with revenge, I flew to quench
My wrath in Paulet's blood—all this I own.
But by the sacred eye of Providence!
That views each human step, and still detects

The murderer's deed; of this imputed crime
My heart is ignorant, my hands are clear.

Beauf. sen. I wish thee innocent—

Glan. Have then my words

No weight? and is his own attesting hand
No proof against him? Is her secret flight
An accident? No more—O partial man!
To hide thy daughter's shame, thou seek'st my life.
But I appeal from thee to public justice.

Beauf. sen. To that thou art consign'd: and may the
hand

Of strict enquiry drag to open day
All secret guilt, tho' shame indelible
Should brand a daughter nearest to my heart.
Heaven aid my search! I seek not blood, but truth,
Guard safe your prisoner to the magistrate,
I'll follow you. The justice thou demand'st,
Thou shalt not want.

Glan. 'Tis well: I ask no more.
Let Ragozin, let Isabella too
Attend the magistrate—on them I call
To clear my slander'd name.

Beauf. sen. It shall be so.
Take them this instant to your strictest care.
Thou too, Sifroy, be ready to attend.
Sif. O think not I will leave him, till full proof
Condemn him or acquit.

Beauf. sen. The cause demands it.

[*Exeunt Officers with Glanville guarded.*

Sif. Whence has the miscreant this unusual firmness ?
Can guilt be free from terror ?

Beauf. sen. No, my son :
And thro' the mask of smooth hypocrisy,
Methinks I see conceal'd a trembling heart.
If he be true, my daughter must be false :
If he be guiltless, who hath murder'd Paulet ?

Sif. There, there, thank Heaven ! my hands are
innocent.

But oh, my love !—Conduct me where she strays
Forlorn and comfortless ! Alas, who knows—
Her tender heart perhaps this moment breaks
With my unkindness ! Wretch ! what hast thou lost !

Enter BEAUFORT junior.

Beauf. jun. Thy soul's sweet peace !—Never, no
never more
To be regain'd !—Shame, anguish, and despair
Shall haunt thy future hours ! Severe remorse
Shall strike his vulture talons thro' thy heart,
And rend thy vital threads.

Beauf. sen. What means my son ?

Sif. My brother !—If I may conjure thee yet
By that dear name.—

Beauf. jun. Thou may'st not—I disclaim it.

Sif. Why dost thou still alarm my shuddering soul
With rising terrors ?

Beauf. sen. My dear son, relieve
Thy father from this dread suspense !

Beauf. jun. O Sir ! how shall I speak ! or in what
words

Unfold the horrors of this night!—My sister—
Lost to her wretched self—thro' dreary wilds
Wanders distracted—void of reason's light
To guide her devious feet.

Beauf. sen. Support me, Heaven!
Then every hope is fled!—Thy will be done!—
Where is my child? Where was she found?

Beauf. jun. Alas!
Of soul too delicate, too soft to bear
Unjust reproach, and undeserved shame,
Distraction seiz'd her in the gloom of night,
As passing thro' the wood she sought the arms
Of a protecting father.

Sif. Do I live?
Is such a wretch permitted still to breathe?
Why opens not this earth? Why sleeps above
The lightning's vengeful blast? Is Heaven unjust?
Or am I still reserv'd for deeper wo?
I hope not mercy—that were impious—
Pour then on my bare head, ye ministers
Of wrath! your hottest vengeance—

Beauf. jun. Stop—forbear—
Nor imprecate that vengeance, which unseen
Already hangs o'er thy devoted life.
Thou know'st not yet the measure of thy wo.
Thy child, thy lovely babe, a bloody corse,
Lies breathless by his frantic mother's side—
Much to be fear'd, by her own hand destroy'd,
When reason in her brain had lost dominion.

Sif. My child too gone!—Then misery is complete—
O my torn heart!—Is there in heaven no pity?

None, none for me ! The wrongs of all I lov'd
To heaven ascending, bar th' eternal gates,
And close the ear of mercy 'gainst my prayer.
But fate's last bolt is thrown, and I am curst
Beyond all power to sharpen torture's pang.
Yes, I am scorn'd, abandon'd, and cast out
By heaven and earth !—I must not call thee father—
I have undone thee, robb'd thee of the name :
And now, myself am childless, and undone.

Beauf. sen. Forbear, my son, to aggravate thy grief,
Already too severe. Kind Providence
May yet restóre, and harmonize her mind.

Sif. May Heaven pour blessings on thy reverend head
For that sweet hope ! but say, where shall I see her ?—
How bear the dreadful sight !

Beauf. jun. Dreadful indeed !
On the cold earth they found her laid : her head,
Supported on her arm, hung o'er her child,
The image of pale grief, lamenting innocence.
Sometimes she speaks fond words, and seems to smile
On the dead babe as 'twere alive.—Now, like
The melancholy bird of night, she pours
A soft and melting strain, as if to soothe
Its slumbers : and now clasps it to her breast,
Cries Glanville is not here—fear not, my love,
He shall not come—Then wildly throws her eyes
Around, and in the tenderest accent calls
Aloud on thee, to save her from dishonour !

Sif. Haste, let us haste—distracted thus, she grows

Still dearer, still more precious to my soul !
O let me soothe her sorrows into peace.

Beauf. sen. Stay—calls she frequently on Glanville's name ?

Beauf. jun. So they report who found her.

Beauf. sen. Left they her
Alone ?

Beauf. jun. No : but all arts to court her thence
were vain.

Beauf. sen. Thither with speed this moment let us fly.
Let Glanville too attend. From the wild words
Of madness and delirium, he who struck
From darkness light—may call discovery forth,
To guide our footsteps.

Beauf. jun. Just is your resolve,
And I will follow you—but have receiv'd
Intelligence of Paulet that imports us.

Sif. Of Paulet ! of my friend ! What may it be ?

Beauf. jun. As yet I'm ignorant.

Beauf. sen. To gain us light,
Be no means left untry'd. [Exit *Beauf. jun.*

Sif. But haste, we linger.
Yet whither can I fly ? where seek for peace ?
In its most tender vein my heart is wounded !
Had I been smote in any other part,
I could have borne with firmness ; but in thee,
My wrong'd, my ruin'd love, I bleed to death.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Wood. CLEONE is discovered sitting by her dead child; over whom she hath form'd a little bower of shrubs and branches of trees. She seems very busy in picking little sprigs from a bough in her hand.

Cleone sings.

*SWEETER than the damask rose
Was his lovely breast ;
There, O let me there repose,
Sigh, sigh, and sink to rest.*

Did I not love him? who can say I did not?
My heart was in his bosom, but he tore
It out, and cast it from him—Yet I lov'd—
And he more lovely seem'd to that fond heart,
Than the bright cherub sailing on the skirts
Of yonder cloud, th' inhabitant of heaven.

Enter SIFROY, BEAUFORT Senior, ISABELLA,
*GLANVILLE, RAGOZIN, Officers, &c.

Beauf. sen. This is the place—And see my hapless
child!

Why, gracious Heaven! why have I liv'd to feel
This dreadful moment? Soft I pray ye tread—
And let us well observe her speech and action.

Sif. Have I done this!—and do I live!—My heart

Drops blood ! but to thy guidance I will bend,
And in forc'd silence smother killing grief.

Glan. [Aside.] Did'st thou not tell me, villain, she
was dead ?

Rag. [Aside.] I was deceiv'd—by Heav'n, I thought
her so.

Glan. [Aside.] May hell reward thee.

Beauf. sen. Stay—she rises—hush !

Cle. Soft ! soft ! he stirs—

O, I have wak'd him—I have wak'd my child !
And when false Glanville knows it, he again
Will murder him.

Beauf. sen. Mark that !

Glan. And are the words
Of incoherent madness to convict me ?

Sif. They are the voice of Heaven, detecting murder !
Yes, villain ! thy infernal aim appears.

Cle. No, no ; all still—As undisturb'd he sleeps
As the stolen infant rock'd in th' eagle's nest.
I'll call the red-breast, and the nightingale,
Their pious bills once cover'd little babes,
And sung their dying dirge. Again, sweet birds !
Again pour forth your melancholy notes,
And soothe once more that innocence ye love.

Sif. On that enchanting voice, how my fond heart
Hath hung with rapture !—now too deeply pierc'd
I die upon the sound. [He advances towards her.
My dearest love,
Behold thy own Sifroy, return'd to calm
Thy griefs ! and pour into thy wounded mind
The healing balm of tenderness !

Cle. [Frighted and trembling.] Sweet Heaven,
Protect me! O, if you have pity, save
My infant!—Cast away that bloody steel!
And on my knees I'll kiss the gentle hand
That spar'd my child!—Glanville shall never know
But we are dead—In this lone wood we'll live,
And I no more will seek my husband's house.
And yet I never wrong'd him! never indeed!

Sif. I know thou didst not—Look upon me, love!
Dost thou not know me? I am thy Sifroy—
Thy husband—Do not break my heart—O speak!
That look will kill me!

Beauf. sen. My dear child! Look up—
Look on thy father! Am I too forgotten?
Is every filial trace in thy poor brain
Defac'd—She knows us not!—May Heaven, my son,
Lend thee its best support! For me—my days
Are few; nor can my sorrows date be long
Protracted.

Sif. Say not so! Must I become
The murderer of all I hold most dear?

Cle. Yes—yes—a husband once—a father too
I had—but lost, quite lost—deep in my brain
Bury'd they lie—In heaps of rolling sand—
I cannot find them.

Sif. O heart-rending grief!
How is that fair, that amiable mind,
Disjoined, blasted by the fatal rage
Of one rash moment! [She goes to her child, he follows.
Let sweet pity veil

The horrors of this scene from every eye!
My child! my child! hide, hide me from that sight!

[Turns away.

Cle. Stay, stay—for you are good, and will not hurt

My lamb. Alas, you weep—why should you weep?
I am his mother, yet I cannot weep.
Have you more pity than a mother feels?
But I shall weep no more—my heart is cold.

Sif. [Falling on his knees.] O mitigate thy wrath,
good Heaven! Thou know'st

My weakness—lay not on thy creature more
Than he can bear: Restore her, O restore!
But if it must not be—if I am doom'd
To stand a dreadful warning to deter
Frail man from sudden rage—Almighty Power,
Then take, in mercy take, this wretched life!

[As he rises, Isabella comes forward and throws herself at his feet.

Isab. Hear, hear me, Sir; my very heart is pierc'd!
And my shock'd soul, beneath a load of guilt,
Sinks down in terrors unsupportable.
'Tis Heaven impels me to reveal the crimes,
In which a fatal passion has involv'd me.
Protect me, save me from his desperate rage!

[Glanville suddenly pulls out a short dagger which he had conceal'd in his bosom; and attempts to stab her: one of the Officers wrenches it from him.

Beauf. sen. Ha! seize the dagger!

Sif. Hold thy murderous hand!

Rag. [Aside,] All is betray'd—for me no safety now,
But sudden flight. [He endeavours to withdraw.

Sif. Stop—seize—detain that slave !
Th' attempt to fly bespeaks him an accomplice.

[He is seized by the Officers.

Isab. [To Glanville.] Tremble, O wretch !—Thou
seest that Heaven is just,
Nor suffers even ourselves to hide our deeds.
To death I yield—nor hope, nor wish for life—
Permit me to reveal some dreadful truths,
And I shall die content. Thy hapless wife,
Chaste as the purest angel of the sky,
By Glanville is traduc'd—by him betray'd.
Paulet is murder'd—and by his device,
The lovely child. Seduc'd by his vile arts,
And by the flattering hopes of wealth ensnar'd,
Distracting thought ! I have destroy'd my soul.

Beauf. sen. Why, why so far from virtue didst thou
stray,
That to compassionate thy wretched fate,
Almost is criminal ?

[To Glanville.] But canst thou bear—
Can thy hard heart support this dreadful scene ?

Glan. I know the worst, and am prepar'd to meet it.
That wretch hath seal'd my death. And had I but
Aveng'd her timorous perfidy—the rest
I'd leave to fate ; and neither should lament
My own, nor pity yours.

Sif. Inhuman savage !
But justice shall exert her keenest scourge,

And wake to terror thy unfeeling heart.
 Guard them to safe confinement.—Killing sight !
 Behold that piteous object !—Her dumb grief
 Speaks to my heart unutterable wo !
 Horror is in her silence—[He goes to her] My dear love !
 Look, look upon me ! Let these tears prevail,
 And with thy reason, wake thy pity too.

Cle. Again you weep—But had you lost a wife,
 As I a husband, you might weep indeed !
 Or had you lost so sweet a boy as mine,
 'Twould break your heart !

Sif. Her words are pointed steel !
 Have I not lost a wife ?—lost a sweet boy ?
 Indeed I have !—Myself too murder'd them !

Cle. That was unkind—Why did you so ?—But
 hush !

Let no one talk of murder—I was kill'd—
 My husband murder'd me—but I forgave him.

Sif. I cannot, cannot bear !—O torture ! torture !
Beauf. sen. Collect thyself, and with the humble eye
 Of patient hope, look up to Heaven resign'd.

Sif. Hope ! where is hope !—Alas, no hope for me !
 On downy pinions, lo ! to heaven she flies—
 To realms of bliss—where I must never come !
 Terrors are mine—and from the depths below,
 Despair looks out and beckons me to sink !

Beauf. sen. Assuage thy grief ! call reason to thy aid,
 Perhaps we yet may save her precious life ;
 At least delay not, by some gentle means,
 To soothe her to return.

Sif. May soft persuasion dwell tipon thy lips !
But ah, can tears or arguments avail,
When reason marks not ?

Enter BEAUFORT junior.

Beauf. jun. Where, where is my sister ?

Beauf. sen. Alas ! the melancholy sight will pierce
Thy inmost soul !—But do not yet disturb her.
Distraction o'er her memory hangs a cloud,
That hides us from her.

Sif. My dearest brother ! can thy heart receive
The wretch, who robb'd it of a sister's love ?

Beauf. jun. I do forgive thee all—Alas, my bro-
ther !

Most basely wert thou wrong'd. But truth is found—
Paulet, tho' wounded, yet escap'd with life.

Sif. Then Heaven is just--But tell me, how escap'd--

Beauf. jun. Thou shalt know all—But stay ! my
sister speaks—

Cle. [Coming forward.] O who hath done it !—who
hath done this deed

Of death ?—My child is murder'd—my sweet babe
Bereft of life !—Thou Glanville ! thou art he !
Remorseless fiend ! destroy a child ! an infant !—
Monster, forbear !—See, see the little heart
Bleeds on his dagger's point !

[*Looking down to the earth.*

But lo ! the furies !—the black fiends of hell
Have seiz'd the murderer ! look ; they tear his heart—
That heart which had no pity ! Hark ; he shrieks—

His eye-balls glare—his teeth together gnash
In bitterness of anguish—while the fiends
Scream in his frightened ear—*Thou shalt not murder!*

Beauf. sen. What dreadful visions terrify her brain ?
To interrupt her must relieve.—Speak to her.

Sif. My dearest love!—cast but one look upon us!

Cle. [Looking up to heaven.] Is that my infant?—
Whither do ye bear

My bleeding babe? Not yet. O mount not yet,
Ye sons of light, but take me on your wings,
With my sweet innocent—I come! I come!

[*Her father and brother take hold of her.*
Yet hold; where is my husband—my Sifroy?
Will not he follow? Will he quite forsake
His poor lost wife?—O tell him I was true! [Swoons.

Beauf. sen. Alas, she faints!—I fear the hand of
death

Is falling on her. Gently bear her up.

Sif. O God! my heart—
My heart-strings break!—Did not her dying words
Dwell on my name? Did not her latest sigh
Breathe tenderness for me?—for me, the wretch,
Whose rash suspicion, whose intemperate rage,
Abandon'd her to shame!—Hah! gracious Heaven!
Does she not move? Does not returning light
Dawn in her feeble eye? Her opening lips
Breathe the sweet hope of life!

Cle. Where have I been?

What dreadful dreams have floated in my brain!

Beauf. sen. How fares my child?

Cle. O faint ! exceeding faint !
My father !—my dear father !—Do I wake ?
And am I, am I in a father's arms ?
My brother too—O happy !

Beauf. jun. My dear sister !

Sif. Transporting rapture ! Will my love return
To life ? to reason too ? indulgent Power !

Cle. What sound, what well-known voice is that I
hear !

Support me, raise me to his long-lost arms !
It is my husband ! my Sifroy ! my love !
Alas, too faint—I never more shall rise.

Sif. Ah ! do not wound me, do not pierce my heart
With any thought so dreadful ! Art thou given
In mockery only to my longing arms ?
Raise up thy head, my love ! lean on my breast,
And whisper to my soul thou wilt not die.

Cle. How thy sweet accents soothe the pangs of death !
Witness ye angels ! thus in thy dear arms
To die, my faithful love, and spotless truth
Confirm'd, was all my wish ! Where is my father ?
Let me but take his blessings up to heaven,
And I shall go with confidence !

Beauf. sen. My child—

My darling child !—May that pure bliss, just heaven
Bestows upon departed saints, be thine !

Cle. Farewell, my brother ! comfort and support
Our father's feeble age—To heal his grief
Will give thy sister's dying moments ease.

Sif. Talk not of death!—We must not, must not part!

Good Heaven! her dying agonies approach!

Cle. The keenest pang of death, is that I feel
For thy surviving wo.—Adieu, my love!
I do entreat thee with my last, last breath,
Restrain thy tears—nor let me grieve to think
Thou feel'st a pain I cannot live to cure.

Sif. Might'st thou but live, how light were every
 pain

Fate could inflict!

Cle. It will not be!—I faint—
My spirits fail—farewell—receive me, Heaven. [Dies.

Sif. She's gone!—for ever gone!—Those lovely
 eyes

Are clos'd in death—no more to look on me!
My fate is fix'd, and in this tortur'd breast
Anguish—remorse—despair—must ever dwell.

Beauf. sen. Offended power! at length with pitying
 eyes

Look on our misery! Cut short this thread,
That links my soul too long to wretched life!

And let mankind, taught by his hapless fate,
Learn one great truth, experience finds too late;
That dreadful ills from rash resentment flow,
And sudden passions end in lasting wo.

[*Exeunt.*

THE END.

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EPILOGUE,
By WILLIAM SHENSTONE, Esq.

Spoken by Mrs. BELLAMY.

*WELL, Ladies—so much for the Tragic stile—
And now, the custom is—to make you smile.
“ To make us smile, I hear Flippanta say,
“ Yes—we have smil’d indeed—thro’ half the play :
“ We always laugh when Bards, demure and sly,
“ Bestow such mighty pains—to make us cry.
“ And truly, to bring sorrow to a crisis,
“ Mad-folks, and murder’d babes are—shrewd devices.*

*“ The Captain gone three years—and then to blame
“ The vestal conduct of his virtuous dame !—
“ What French, what English bride would think it treason,
“ When thus accus’d—to give the brute some reason ?
“ Out of my house—this night, forsooth—depart !
“ A modern wife had said—With all my heart :
“ But think not, haughty Sir, I’ll go alone !
“ Order your coach—conduct me safe to town—
“ Give me my jewels—wardrobe—and my maid—
“ And pray take care my pin-money be paid :
“ Else know, I wield a pen—and, for his glory,
“ My dear’s domestic feats may shine in story !*

“ Then for the Child—the tale was truly sad—
“ But who for such a bantling would run mad ?
“ What wife, at midnight hour inclin’d to roam,
“ Would fondly drag her little chit from home ?
“ What has a mother with her child to do ?
“ Dear brats—the Nursery’s the place for you !”

*Such are the strains of many a modish Fair !
Yet memoires—not of modern growth—declare
The time has been, when modesty and truth
Were deem’d additions to the charms of youth ;
Ere, in the dice-box, ladies found delight ;
Or swoon’d, for lack of cards, on Sunday-night ;
When women hid their necks, and veil’d their faces,
Nor romp’d, nor rak’d, nor star’d, at public places :
Nor took the airs of Amazons—for graces !
When plain domestic virtues were the mode ;
And wives ne’er dreamt of happiness abroad,
But cheer’d their offspring, shunn’d fantastic airs ;
And, with the joys of wedlock, mixt the cares.*

*Such modes are past—yet sure they merit praise ;
For marriage triumph’d in those wassel days :
No virgin sigh’d in vain ; no fears arose,
Lest holy wars should cause a dearth of beaux :
By chaste decorum, each, affection gain’d ;
By faith and fondness, what she won, maintain’d.*

*'Tis yours, ye fair! to mend a thoughtless age,
That scorns the press, the pulpit, and the stage!
To yield frail husbands no pretence to stray:
(Men will be rakes, if women lead the way).
To soothe—But truce with these preceptive lays;—
The Muse, who, dazzled with your ancient praise,
On present worth, and modern beauty tramples,
Must own, she ne'er could boast more bright examples*.*

* Addressing the Boxes.

